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TAGS: PFOR, GB, RH

SUBJ: GABONESE COMMUNIQUE ON RELATIONS WITH RHODESIA
AND SOUTH AFRICA.

1. SUMMARY. ON JULY 16, GABONESE PRESIDENCY PUBLISHED COMMUNIQUE IN RESPONSE TO RECENT NEWSPAPER ARTICLE CONCERNING GABONESE TRADE WITH RHODESIA. COMMUNIQUE UNDOUBTEDLY AN ATTEMPT TO POLISH GABONESE CREDENTIALS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA BEFORE UP-COMING KAMPALA SUMMIT, END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER THE PRESIDENT RECEIVED A DELEGATION OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL COUNCIL (ANC) JULY 16 CONDUCTED BY ITS PRESIDENT, MR. OLIVIER TAMBO, THE PRESIDENCY PUBLISHED A COMMUNIQUE ON GABONESE RELATIONS WITH RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA. THE KEY PORTIONS OF THIS COMMUNIQUE ARE AS FOLLOWS:

3. "AFTER THE PROCLAMATION OF INDEPENDENCE OF SAO TOME
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AND PRINCIPE AND A VISIT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE ANC, AND

ESPECIALLY ON THE EVE OF THE OAU MEETING IN KAMPALA...,
GABON WOULD LIKE TO MAKE PERFECTLY CLEAR ITS POSITION ON
THE TOTAL LIBERATION OF AFRICA AND ESPECIALLY OF SOUTHERN
AFRICA, WHICH IS STILL UNDER THE YOKE OF COLONIAL AND
RACIST MINORITIES. THE ENEMIES OF OUR CONTINENT HAVE TRIED
TO DISCREDIT THE ENERGETIC ACTION OF GABONESE POLITICS VIA
CERTAIN DEFAMATORY ARTICLES IN THE PRESS MANIFESTLY INSPIRED
BY FISHERS IN THE TROUBLED WATER OF AFRICAN DIVISION...".

4. CONCERNING THE RHODESIAN QUESTION, GABON REAFFIRMS THAT:
A. THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE RESOLUTION OF THE
QUESTION OF ZIMBABWE BELONGS TO GREAT BRITAIN AS THE
ADMINISTERING POWER. THIS CONFIRMS TO THE PERTINENT
RESOLUTIONS OF THE OAU AND UN.

B. THUS, IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF GREAT BRITAIN TO TAKE
ALL NECESSARY MEASURES IN ORDER TO PREPARE THE PEOPLE OF
ZIMBABWE FOR THE EXERCISE OF THEIR INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF
SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE, INCLUDING THE CALLING
OF A CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE IN ORDER TO DETERMINE THE
FUTURE OF ZIMBABWE BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF ONE MAN ONE
VOTE. ON THIS OCCASION, GABON WOULD LIKE TO UNDERLINE
THAT FOR REASONS OF AFRICAN DIGNITY THIS CONSTITUTIONAL
CONFERENCE CAN IN NO WAY BE HELD IN PRETORIA.

C. GABON HAS ALWAYS RECOGNIZED THE LEGITIMACY OF THE
ECONOMIC SANCTIONS OF THE UN AGAINST THE REBEL RHODESIA.
THESE SANCTIONS CAN BE EFFICIENT ONLY IN THE MEASURE
THAT THEY REINFORCE THE ISOLATION OF THE REBEL ADMINIS-
TRATION OF IAN SMITH AS LONG AS IT REFUSES TO RECOGNIZE
THE RIGHTS OF THE MAJORITY.

D. THE SO-CALLED ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL RELATIONS OF
GABON WITH RHODESIA...PREDATE THE ECONOMIC SANCTIONS
ADOPTED BY THE UNITED NATIONS. FROM THIS INSTANT,
GABON HAS CEASED THESE RELATIONS WITH RHODESIA. THERE
REMAINS OF COURSE THE PROBLEM OF MEAT TRADE TO WHICH
WE HAVE NOT PUT AN END FOR REASONS OF STRUCTURE.

E. BUT GABON WOULD LIKE TO DECLARE THAT GIVEN THE IMPROVE-
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MENT OF ITS ECONOMIC SITUATION, GABON HAS TAKEN ALL
NECESSARY ACTIONS IN ORDER TO PUT AN END AT AN OPPORTUNE
TIME TO THESE LAST ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH LINK IT TO
RHODESIA.

F. ON THE OTHER HAND, EVERYONE KNOWS THAT THERE ARE
COUNTRIES THAT AFTER THE DECLARATION OF SANCTIONS AGAINST
RHODESIA BY THE OAU AND UN BEGAN ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND

OTHER RELATIONS WITH RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA CONTRARY TO THE ENGAGEMENTS THEY HAD JUST SIGNED. BUT, BECAUSE OF COURTESY AND RESPECT FOR THESE BROTHER STATES, AND ESPECIALLY IN ORDER TO SAFEGUARD AFRICAN UNITY IN FACE OF THE DIVISIVE MANEUVERS OF ITS TRADITIONAL ENEMIES, GABON WILL ABSTAIN FROM PLAYING THE GAME OF THE ENEMY AND (WILL NOT NAME THESE STATES).

G. GABON SUPPORTS AND ASSISTS THE LEGITIMATE FIGHT OF THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA AND REAFFIRMS, ESPECIALLY UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, ITS HOSTILITIES TO THE POLITICS OF EETENTE AND DIALOGUE WITH THE MINORITY AND RACIST REGIMES OF SOUTH AFRICA AND RHODESIA, A POLITICS THAT ATTEMPTS TO RESOLVE THE QUESTION OF ZIMBABWE AND SOUTH AFRICA (WITHOUT) LIBERATION MOVEMENTS RECOGNIZED BY OAU AND UN AS ONLY AUTHENTIC AND LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THEIR PEOPLE. GABON, WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN HONORED TO WELCOME ON ITS SOIL A SUMMIT CONFERENCE OF CHIEFS OF STATE OF AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS IN 1977, REAFFIRMS ITS ENGAGEMENT TO THE CAUSE OF TOTAL LIBERATION OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT AND DECLARES IT WILL UNCEASINGLY WORK FOR THE RESPECT OF THE PRINCIPLE AND THE REALIZATION OF THE OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE CHARTER OF THE OAU.

5. COMMENT. COMMUNIQUE OBVIOUSLY ATTEMPT BY PRESIDENT BONGO TO EXPLAIN AWAY HIS TRADE WITH RHODESIA AND TO POLISH HIS CREDENTIALS ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN QUESTIONS BEFORE UPCOMING OAU SUMMIT IN KAMPALA. AT VERY LEAST, PRESIDENT PROBABLY HOPES THAT OTHER AFRICAN STATES THAT TRADE WITH RHODESIA, WHOSE NAMES HE COULD MENTION BUT HASN'T, WILL REFRAIN FROM CRITICIZING GOG AT SUMMIT. IN ANY EVENT, IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT PRESIDENT PLANS TO END MEAT TRADE AS THIS PROFITABLE NOT ONLY TO GABON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BUT REPORTEDLY TO PRESIDENT AS WELL. PRESIDENT'S REJECTION OF DIALOGUE WITH SOUTH AFRICA AND RHODESIAN GOVERNMENTS HARDENING OF PREVIOUS GABONESE POSITION FAVORING DIALOGUE IF AGREED UPON BY LIBERATION MOVEMENTS. BAAS

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